

INQUIRY INTO CROSS CITY TUNNEL

Organisation:

Name: Mr Syd Friedlander OAM

Telephone:

Date Received: 27/05/2006

Theme:

Summary

S. J. FRIEDLANDER

Order of Aust. Medal 1991
Centenary Medal 2003
Hon. Fell. McQ Univ. 2004

RE : ENQUIRY INTO LANE COVE TUNNEL

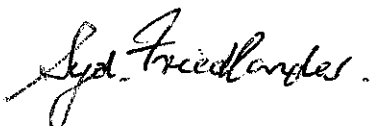
ATTENTION OF REVD THE HON. FRED NILE MLC
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

DEAR SIR

DUE TO MY HAVING INTENSIVE DIALYSIS TREATMENT IN THE MATER HOSPITAL , I HAVE BEEN FORCED TO BE
A FEW DAYS LATE IN FORWARDING MY SUBMISSION

I HOPE THAT IT WILL BE ACCEPTED BY YOU , AND THAT IT WILL BE USEFUL TO YOUR COMMITTEE.

YOURS SINCERELY



25 MAY 2006

TOWN PLANNING TOLLS

The fiasco of the Cross City Tunnel, and very probably an impending fiasco of the Lane Cove Tunnel, highlight the need for a single independent Authority to plan, govern and implement the planning of the Sydney region.

The Cumberland County Council of elected Local Government members, was conceived in 1945, and established in 1951, as the prime Authority responsible for the town planning of the entire Sydney Region. One of the chief concerns of the CCC Planning Scheme was to lay down guidelines for the orderly development of post war suburbs. This exercise had never before been attempted.

The subsequent detailed report listed the needs of the "citizen", sewerage, footpaths, carriageways, new schools, local shops, baby clinics, nearby open spaces, etc. The report pointed out that many homes in the County did not possess these features, or even half of them. The report recommended urban districts each with a centre for business, entertainment, cultural and educational activities, and scope for local employment.

Encircling these would be a girdle of countryside... The Green Belt... and a rail and road network would link the City with the urban and rural districts.

However the CCC was not given the power to fully implement its visions. Various government departments, managed by **unelected** public servants, such as Dept. of Main Roads, Sydney County Council, Railways, State Electricity Authority, Metropolitan Water Sewerage Board, et al, continued to independently implement their own planning and financing priorities. All without reference to the Cumberland County Council, and in many instances ignoring the principles laid down by Cumberland. The NSW State Government, **by sole Ministerial** decree in 1964, dispensed with the local government democratically elected C.C.C., and substituted it with an unelected public servant managed Government department, the State Planning Authority. Its existence was short lived... being firstly replaced by the Planning and Environment Commission and then other bodies, without consultancy with the general public,

These new bodies did much damage to the well considered Town Planning principles of the earlier C.C.C. by allowing other State Government bodies to erode the visions and principles of the C.C.C.

The erosion included attacks on the Green Belt plans. Ad hoc rezoning of land to suit private interests commenced. Industrial and commercial buildings were allowed to exceed height limits in sensitive tree foliage landscapes were discarded, etc etc. Ministerial decisions of **ALL** political persuasion assisted in setting aside the planning and environmental philosophies of the C.C.C.

Ultimately, "governance" lead to a hitherto irregular method of financing State projects... allowing for development of motorways by **State and private enterprise jointly**. Also allowing the private interests the right to impact on other adjoining public roads in order to divert traffic into their developments, to augment toll fees.

Such is the case of the Cross City Tunnel , and the Lane Cove Tunnel -- underway with cloudy "use prospects" and cloudy "economic factors" These are mystifying the general population which is showing resistance.

The average age of the current Government legislators and opposition members mean that many were infants/children in the hey day of the Cumberland County Council, and therefore have little knowledge of the foresight , work and standards set up by the C.C.C. in its detailed plan for the future of the Sydney region.

Some parliamentarians and support staff appear to **lack the business acumen** necessary for dealing with private enterprise, at the expense of community interest. It seems that planning checks and balances are not high on the Government's contract management agenda.

The Cross City Tunnel is under a cloud and will need to prove its performance and traffic usage. Additionally, questions should be asked as to... "Why was the Tunnel decided upon in the first place?" ... "Why constrict other adjacent routes, unless to increase the earning capacity of the Tunnel for the benefit of the private interest?"

The hitherto references to the work of the Cumberland County Council should highlight its predictions, in 1963, as to the future of the Sydney region, where it successfully predicted that Sydney's population would double to over 4 million persons at the turn of the century.

Also the C.C.C. predicted that the city centre would be surrounded by high density district centres - Bankstown, Parramatta, Penrith, Campbelltown and Chatswood. To the east, Bondi Junction has developed similarly.

Due to the increased costs of motoring and unreliable public transport , Town Planners of today could anticipate that the intensity of traffic flows into the City, from east, west, south and north will diminish in time... forcing the "outer" neighbourhoods to make increased use of the commercial / retail outlets and employment opportunities offered by the large department store expansions in their "local" areas. **The desire and need to enter the CBD will be diminished.**

This brings to mind the same questions which should be asked as to the **Lane Cove Tunnel..**

- "Why was it proposed in the first place?"
- "Was it considered to be essential?" and "Was there an alternative ?"

THERE WAS !

Lane Cove Council in the late 1980' sponsored an engineering design for surface flyovers and road separations at the junction of Epping Road and Longueville Road , (this being the main cause of stoppage of traffic flow) and the Centennial Avenue intersection. These constructions were estimated to cost within the then resources of the Department of Main Roads . The writer... Mayor of Lane Cove for a substantial period at the time ...obtained the verbal support of the then Premier The Hon. Nick Greiner. We believed that our proposed work would go ahead.

With regret we later learned that the Minister for Main Roads, Mr. Bruce Baird , had vetoed the proposal ...and allocated the funding to roadworks within his electorate.

- What is the purpose of the ' Tunnel' , when surface flyovers/underpasses could have been constructed at a fraction of the cost ??
- Why was the particular section of the Epping Highway chosen for a Tunnel. when the particular length of the surface roadway had space for widening. ?
- What consultations, if any, took place with the Councils and the residents prior to the Government's announcement that the tunnel was to be constructed ... and if terms of finance , tolls and changes to other roads were disclosed to the public at any prior consultations ?
- Will West Lane Cove , Longueville, Riverview and other motorists travelling Longueville Road be able to reach , or leave , the Pacific Highway without paying a toll ?

The questions asked in this analysis should be referred to an independent Authority – {or a Royal Commission if applicable} – to urgently report on the whole matter, together with a report as to the necessity for a single regional body , (similar to the Cumberland County Council) to be responsible for the Town Planning of the Sydney region and its implementation ... with a proper publicised audit check on contract and finance terms ratified by Parliament.

POSTSCRIPT

The State Government's "Planning" Minister has released new maps opening up for development more than 2500 hectares of land originally earmarked as Green areas in north west and south west Sydney. The Sydney Morning Herald comments ... "the move, aimed at placating landowners wanting to cash in on demand for housing blocks in the planned suburbs scraps all the landscape and rural lifestyle zones outside the development areas, and a large portion inside. The land inside the proposed development areas, which had been zoned as parkland in a bid to end the urban sprawl that characterized the other fringe developments, will now be available for up to 12,000 home lots to house 300,000 people."

More questions:

- * "Apart from the involved land owners and the property (building) industry, were environment bodies and the wide city's citizens consulted per Local Government as to the deprivation of the CCC philosophies.?"
- * "Was the resulting infrastructure considered, having regard for the needs of a population of 300,000 people, ie. Retail commercial industrial etc facilities?"
- * "Would "private interests" be encouraged to anticipate and bid for any resulting tollway to the CBD?"

Final note:

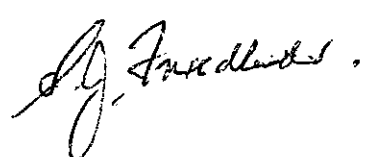
The Cumberland County Council in it's August 1963 book titled SYDNEY'S GREEN BELT stated ::

Sydney, where the Australian nation had its beginnings, has a romantic history and wonderful natural scenery. It is unthinkable that it should merge with an undistinguished urban mass sprawling up and down the coastal area. It would cease to be Sydney and become part of a vast, noisy, noxious maze from which people would try to escape.

... if there were any places left to escape to.

MEANWHILE OUR HERITAGE CUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL TOWN PLANNERS MUST BE TURNING IN THEIR TUNNELS.

Syd. Friedlander OAM Hon Fellow Macq. Univ.



Mayor of Lane Cove 1966, 67, 88, 89, 90, 91
Deputy Mayor 1963, 65, 81, 84

Councillor of Cumberland County Cncl. 1962, 63, 64
(representing the Municipalities of Lane Cove, Hunters Hill, Ryde, Kuringgai, Shire of Hornsby.)